



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Enhanced Public Land – Grasslands - Phase IV

Laws of Minnesota 2020 Accomplishment Plan

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/17/2022

**Project Title:** Enhanced Public Land – Grasslands - Phase IV

**Funds Recommended:** \$2,280,000

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2020, Ch. 104, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd 2(m)

**Appropriation Language:** \$2,280,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever to enhance and restore grassland and wetland habitat on public lands. A list of proposed land restorations and enhancements must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Alexander Nelson

**Title:** MN Restoration Manager

**Organization:** Pheasants Forever, Inc.

**Address:** 1000 150th ave NW

**City:** Spicer, MN 56288

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### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Murray, Freeborn, Cottonwood, Martin, Jackson, Yellow Medicine, Pipestone, Otter Tail, Watonwan, Traverse, Todd, Swift, Stevens, Sibley, Rock, Renville, Redwood, Norman, Mower, Mahnomon, Lyon, Lincoln, Grant, Faribault, Douglas, Clay, Brown, Blue Earth and Big Stone.

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

**Activity types:**

- Restore
- Enhance

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Wetlands
- Prairie

## Narrative

### Abstract

6289 acres of grassland and wetland habitat will be enhanced through this proposal to increase the productivity of game and non-game upland species on Minnesota lands open to public hunting including Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA), and National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). We will accomplish this by working with our partners to follow best practices to conduct wetland restorations, conservation grazing, invasive tree removal, prescribed fire, and diversity seeding in the prairie, forest/prairie transition, and metro regions.

### Design and Scope of Work

According to the MN Prairie Conservation Plan, less than 2% of Minnesota's native prairie remains. Many of the remaining acres of native and restored prairie are degraded from lack of fire, low diversity and spread of invasive trees. There are wetlands in these landscapes that need be to restored and many previously restored basins that are in need of repair. This proposal aims to build on past investments to increase productivity on WPAs, WMAs, and NWRs that are open to hunting so they can reach their full potential for wildlife production.

Activities could include the following:

- 1) Wetlands will be restored/enhanced by removing drain tile, constructing/repairing earthen dams and/or water control structures, and invasive narrow leaf cattail control. Wetlands targeted for enhancement are vital to providing food, cover, and space required for breeding waterfowl and are essential to water quality and aquifer recharge.
- 2) A diverse mixture of native grasses and forbs is ideal for nesting and brood rearing of upland nesting birds and also essential for pollinator species. Many WMAs, WPAs, or NWRs were purchased in sub-optimal habitat condition (e.g. monotype of brome grass) or were restored using low diversity seed mixes that are less productive for wildlife. We will use a site-specific combination of techniques (e.g. cultivation, tree removal, herbicide, and prescribed fire) to bring back productivity to these public lands. In close collaboration with the land managers, we will seed a diverse mix of native grasses and forbs that are well adapted to site conditions. Mowing will be used as needed to manage annual weed pressure to ensure establishment.
- 3) Prescribed burning is the primary tool for managing grassland habitat. It increases vigor, sets back invasive woody species, and removes built up residue.
- 4) Conservation grazing is an important enhancement tool for sites that are difficult to conduct prescribed fires or need to target specific enhancement needs (e.g. cool season grass suppression, tree invasion, etc.). Permanent infrastructure with a lifespan of 30+ years will be installed to conduct conservation grazing plans written to benefit

wildlife.

5) Research has shown that invasive trees are detrimental to prairie/grassland wildlife and will be removed with this proposal. These trees reduce nesting success and provide perches and dens for predators. These predators are highly effective at predating both nests and nesting birds, especially in fragmented low quality habitat.

By creating the best possible habitat on WPAs, NWRs and WMAs, we will strive to help our public land management entities by reducing future investments for management.

A RFP and ranking process has been developed in previous phases that allow us to identify, rank and deliver the projects that have the most impact for grassland and wetland wildlife.

### **How does the plan address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species?**

This project directly addresses the loss of quality habitat on reconstructed and native prairies through restoration and enhancement best practices. By increasing the quality of existing remnant and reconstructed prairie habitat we benefit numerous species that are of special concern, threatened, or endangered. This proposal targets grassland species, including but not limited to, greater prairie chickens, ring-necked pheasants, monarch butterflies, honey bees and dakota skippers.

### **Describe how the plan uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:**

The science and strategy of habitat enhancement in this part of Minnesota is to build functional complexes of habitat where it once existed. The quantity and spatial arrangement of habitat is important. Another important aspect relates to the quality of habitat found there. By enhancing and restoring grasslands and wetlands in key landscapes, we aim to make every acre as productive as possible to provide the most benefit to wildlife and the people of Minnesota. To maximize efficiency and effectiveness, projects will be developed in conjunction with MNDNR and USFWS land managers.

### **Which two sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are most applicable to this project?**

- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

### **Which two other plans are addressed in this program?**

- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan

### **Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?**

#### **Forest / Prairie Transition**

- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

**Metro / Urban**

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity

**Prairie**

- Restore or enhance habitat on public lands

**Does this program include leveraged funding?**

Yes

**Explain the leverage:**

This proposal is the fourth phase of an effort to enhance public lands for the benefit of wildlife and public recreation. All funding has been spent in the first phase and the second phase has a few final projects to complete. Phase III is 100% obligated and work is progressing as planned. Although we have accomplished a significant amount of quality work in previous phases, it is evident there is a significant amount of work remaining and an interest from agency managers to better our public lands. Pheasants Forever, USFWS, MN DNR and other partners are focused on managing grassland habitat for game birds, waterfowl, and all other species of grassland wildlife. Leverage is expected from multiple sources including but not limited to federal sources, contractor donations and PF.

**Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.**

This proposal supplements past investments and is aimed at accelerating the existing enhancement and restoration of strategic public lands.

**Non-OHF Appropriations**

Year	Source	Amount
2002-2010	Heritage Enhancement Grants	\$145,000 HE / \$14,500 PF
2015-2017	NAWCA	\$150,000 HE

**How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?**

The portions of enhancement work that will be completed by this proposal will generally allow the unit to be managed more effectively by the resource manager, whether that be the USFWS or the MNDNR. However, with limited funds and constant pressure to our public land grasslands/wetlands from volunteer invasive trees, water quality decline, aging grasslands, etc., we also expect continued opportunity to supplement local agency efforts. While it's difficult for a third party like us to provide an analysis of future costs on existing public land, according to the Long-Range Budget Analysis of Land Management Needs, the cost of long-term management ranges from \$11-16/acre annually. We expect that average need to be the same for the parcels we worked on.

**Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Post Project Completion - WMA	MN DNR - Game and Fish Funds	Monitoring	Maintenance	-
Post Project Completion - WPA	USFWS - Federal	Monitoring	Maintenance	-
Post Project Completion -NWR	USFWS-Federal	Monitoring	Maintenance	-

## Activity Details

### Requirements

**If funded, this program will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?**

Yes

**Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?**

Yes

**Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15?**

Yes

**Where does the activity take place?**

- WMA
- WPA
- Refuge Lands

### Land Use

**Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?**

No

## Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Distribute Project Request for Proposals to Area Land Managers	Fall 2020
Review Project RFPs with project selection committee	Winter 2020-21
Select Projects for completion and hire contractors to complete habitat work	Winter 2020-21
Enhancement / Restoration work begins	Spring 2021
Re-evaluate project status/budget and solicit additional projects as needed	Winter 2021
Enhancement / Restoration work completed	Summer 2025

**Date of Final Report Submission:** 11/01/2025

**Budget**

*Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan.*

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$112,400	-	-	\$112,400
Contracts	\$2,118,300	\$67,700	Federal, Private, PF	\$2,186,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$4,600	-	-	\$4,600
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$44,700	-	-	\$44,700
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$2,280,000</b>	<b>\$67,700</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$2,347,700</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
PF State Coordinator	0.02	3.0	\$4,400	-	-	\$4,400
PF Field Staff	0.35	3.0	\$81,000	-	-	\$81,000
PF Grants Staff	0.12	3.0	\$27,000	-	-	\$27,000

**Amount of Request:** \$2,280,000

**Amount of Leverage:** \$67,700

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 2.97%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$157,100

**As a % of the total request:** 6.89%

**Easement Stewardship:** -

**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -

**How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?**

We have reduced accomplishments/costs proportionately across the overall program to accommodate the reduced appropriation. As a result of the reduction, we will be able to enhance fewer acres. As in past appropriations, we will focus on the most strategic, highest priority projects.

**Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:**

Leverage is expected from multiple sources including but not limited to federal sources, land value donations,

contractor donations, and PF. Not every source is 100% confirmed at this point. However, PF has an exemplary track record of delivery and over-achievement of match commitments that further stretch OHF funding.

## **Contracts**

### **What is included in the contracts line?**

We anticipate that all of the contract funding will be used for enhancement activities.

## **Travel**

### **Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?**

No

### **Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging**

n/a

### **I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:**

No

## **Direct Support Services**

### **How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?**

PF utilizes the Total Modified Direct Cost method. This methodology is annually approved by the U.S. Department of Interior's National Business Center as the basis for the organization's Indirect Cost Rate agreement. PF's allowable direct support services cost is 4.12%. In this proposal, PF has discounted its rate to 2.0% of the sum of personnel, contracts, and travel. We are donating the difference in-kind.

## **Federal Funds**

### **Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?**

Yes

#### **Are the funds confirmed?**

No

#### **What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds?**

03/15/2021

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	22	44	0	0	66
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	22	6,201	0	0	6,223
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>6,245</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,289</b>

**Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$66,900	\$26,900	-	-	\$93,800
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$8,000	\$2,178,200	-	-	\$2,186,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$74,900</b>	<b>\$2,205,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$2,280,000</b>

**Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	15	15	0	36	0	66
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	112	1,348	0	4,763	0	6,223
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>1,363</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,799</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,289</b>

**Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	\$5,400	\$5,400	-	\$83,000	-	\$93,800
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$40,500	\$488,600	-	\$1,657,100	-	\$2,186,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,900</b>	<b>\$494,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,740,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$2,280,000</b>

**Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	\$3,040	\$611	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$363	\$351	-	-

**Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	\$360	\$360	-	\$2,305	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-



Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$361	\$362	-	\$347	-

### Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

## Outcomes

### Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Increased waterfowl and upland bird migratory and breeding success ~ *Outcomes will be measured by resource professionals and evaluated by using the best science available to land managers.*

### Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- Other ~

### Programs in prairie region:

- Improved condition of habitat on public lands ~ *Outcomes will be measured by resource professionals and evaluated by using the best science available to land managers.*

## Parcels

*For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.*

### Parcel Information

#### Sign-up Criteria?

[Yes](#)

**Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:**

### Restore / Enhance Parcels

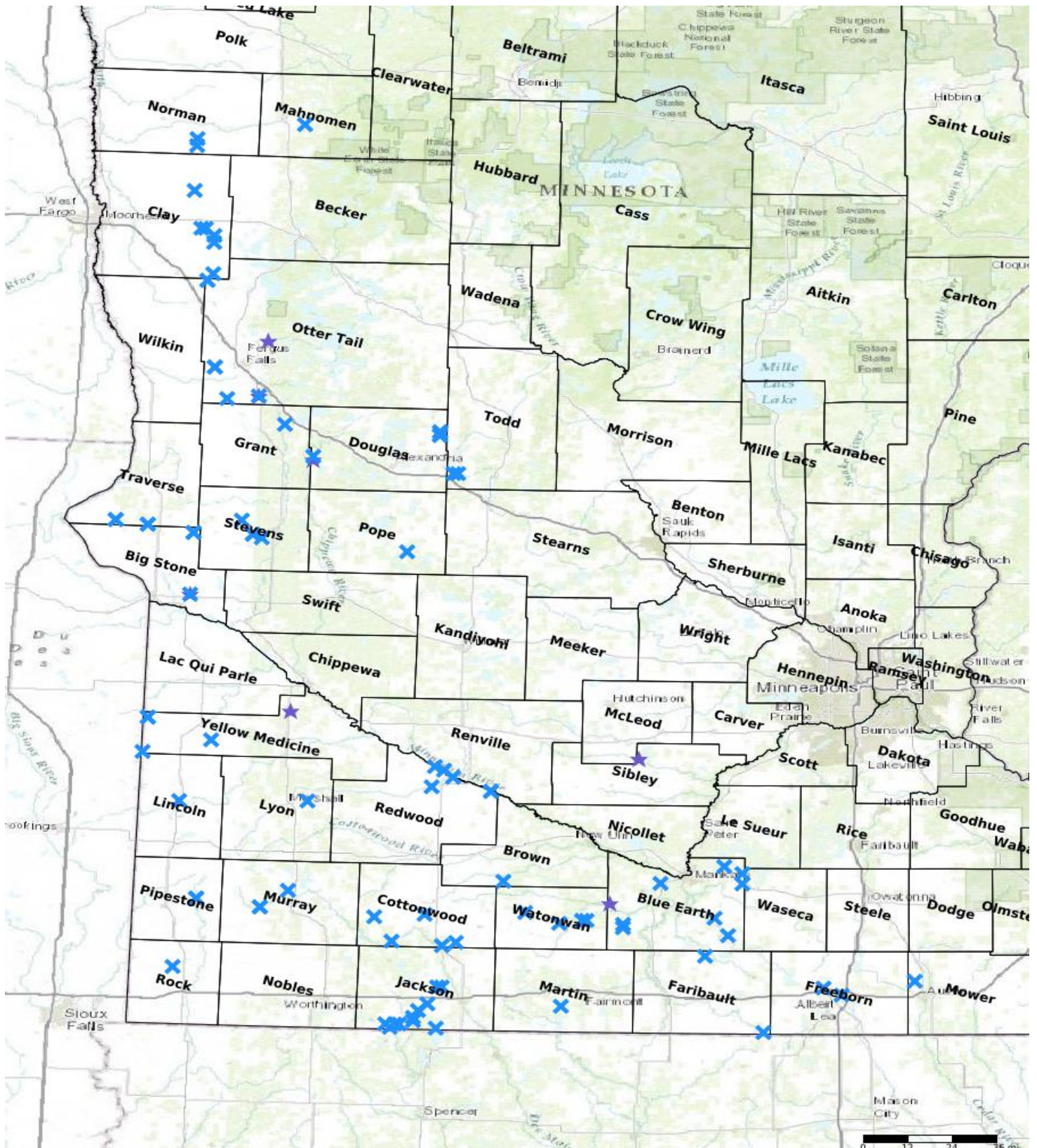
Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Shelstad	Big Stone	12145211	28	\$20,300	Yes
Shelstad	Big Stone	12445211	200	\$80,000	Yes
Shelstad	Big Stone	12445211	1	\$2,200	Yes
Shelstad	Big Stone	12145211	0	\$47,545	Yes
O.A Vee Memorial WMA	Blue Earth	10828225	65	\$6,500	Yes
Lembke WMA	Blue Earth	10629234	42	\$5,188	Yes
Gilfillan Lake WMA	Blue Earth	10925232	37	\$3,650	Yes
Evans Slough WMA	Blue Earth	10629227	160	\$16,000	Yes
Born WMA	Blue Earth	10825225	40	\$4,000	Yes
Pick WMA	Blue Earth	10525209	202	\$65,553	Yes
Perch Lake WPA	Blue Earth	10626213	176	\$35,000	Yes
Pauley WPA	Blue Earth	10729230	156	\$40,000	Yes
Born WMA	Blue Earth	10825212	177	\$45,573	Yes
Wood Lake WMA	Brown	10833229	114	\$28,500	Yes
Three Jetvig Lakes WPA	Clay	13944233	132	\$28,000	Yes
Christiansen WPA	Clay	13844209	236	\$41,000	Yes
Haugtvedt WPA	Clay	13744228	195	\$30,000	Yes
Melby WPA	Clay	14145226	88	\$120,000	Yes
Nelson WPA	Clay	13945224	239	\$30,000	Yes
Noreen WPA	Clay	13944219	492	\$84,000	Yes
Long Lake WPA	Cottonwood	10638222	66	\$28,116	Yes
Wolf Lake WPA	Cottonwood	10535231	2	\$2,000	Yes
Pat's Pasture WMA	Cottonwood	10537229	68	\$3,400	Yes
Banks WMA	Cottonwood	10535227	47	\$2,350	Yes
Harder Lake WPA	Cottonwood	10636216	100	\$30,000	Yes
Ellingson WPA	Douglas	12840219	13	\$10,000	Yes
Roger Holmes WMA	Douglas	12936202	0	\$19,000	Yes
Roger Holmes WMA	Douglas	12936211	475	\$14,250	Yes
Roger Holmes WMA	Douglas	12936202	0	\$125,000	Yes
Ellingson WPA	Douglas	12840218	181	\$20,000	Yes
Roger Holmes WMA	Douglas	12936211	0	\$14,250	Yes
Kiester WPA	Faribault	10124235	75	\$22,500	Yes
Maple River ? Goats	Faribault	10426210	42	\$23,100	Yes
Two Island WPA	Freeborn	10322225	75	\$2,000	Yes
Foster Creek WPA	Freeborn	13023232	150	\$52,500	Yes
Goose Lake WPA	Freeborn	10221203	2	\$2,000	Yes
Spaulding WPA	Grant	13041231	23	\$20,000	Yes

Toe WMA	Jackson	10336236	25	\$8,750	Yes
Skunk Lake WMA	Jackson	10137227	48	\$2,400	Yes
Sioux Forks WPA	Jackson	10136218	310	\$5,000	Yes
Boot Lake WPA	Jackson	10335231	116	\$49,416	Yes
Minnesota WPA	Jackson	10137232	75	\$22,500	Yes
Pletz Slough/Little Sioux WMA	Jackson	10136205	98	\$24,500	Yes
Sioux Forks WPA	Jackson	10136219	95	\$23,750	Yes
Hunter WPA	Jackson	10236227	195	\$3,000	Yes
Sioux Valley WPA	Jackson	10137230	45	\$19,170	Yes
Spirit Lake WPA	Jackson	10136236	64	\$27,264	Yes
Sioux Valley WMA	Jackson	10137228	218	\$10,900	Yes
Chain-O-Sloughs WMA	Lincoln	11145209	31	\$9,300	Yes
Clifton & Rolling Hills WMAs	Lyon	11140206	376	\$75,200	Yes
Sandy Lake WPA	Mahnomen	14441215	106	\$50,000	Yes
Pierce Lake WPA	Martin	10231228	110	\$3,000	Yes
Schamber WPA	Mower	10318217	30	\$25,500	Yes
Mason WPA	Murray	10741216	80	\$40,500	Yes
Peters WMA	Murray	10642209	80	\$20,000	Yes
Peters WMA	Murray	10642209	80	\$20,000	Yes
Dalby WMA	Norman	14345211	60	\$7,500	Yes
Neal WMA	Norman	14345223	191	\$23,875	Yes
Dahler Slough	Otter Tail	13144225	6	\$10,000	Yes
Julsrud WPA	Otter Tail	13644206	111	\$58,900	Yes
Peter Lien WPA	Otter Tail	13142219	17	\$35,000	Yes
Peter Lien WPA	Otter Tail	13142219	7	\$27,000	Yes
Ridgeway WPA (Swenson tract)	Otter Tail	13244209	31	\$17,000	Yes
Ridgeway WPA (Swenson tract)	Otter Tail	13244209	8	\$10,000	Yes
Julsrud WPA	Otter Tail	13644206	111	\$58,900	Yes
Duenow WPA	Otter Tail	13442233	6	\$29,000	Yes
Terrace WMA	Pipestone	10744231	100	\$30,000	Yes
Terrace WMA	Pipestone	10744231	100	\$30,000	Yes
Cedar Mountain WMA	Redwood	11234214	18	\$4,500	Yes
Cedar Rock WMA	Redwood	11236210	47	\$35,250	Yes
Tiger Lake WMA	Redwood	11335228	38	\$19,000	Yes
Cedar Mountain WMA	Redwood	11234214	27	\$13,500	Yes
Cold Springs	Renville	11336211	30	\$15,000	Yes
Granite Prairie WMA	Renville	11335218	28	\$21,000	Yes
Touch the Sky Prairie	Rock	10345208	165	\$33,000	Yes
High Island WPA	Sibley	11428230	168	\$134,400	Yes
Schultz	Stevens	12443212	0	\$22,090	Yes
Mud Creek	Stevens	12442217	269	\$39,750	Yes
Pepperton	Stevens	12543222	147	\$22,050	Yes
Schultz	Stevens	12443212	221	\$33,150	Yes
Overby WPA	Swift	12437234	153	\$76,500	Yes
Quistorff	Todd	12735204	300	\$52,500	Yes
Spohn	Todd	12735205	140	\$24,500	Yes
Lawrence	Traverse	12547230	282	\$42,300	Yes
Lawrence	Traverse	12547230	0	\$47,000	Yes
Geyer	Traverse	12546232	258	\$38,700	Yes
Geyer	Traverse	12546232	0	\$58,000	Yes
Curry WMA	Watonswan	10632207	11	\$4,950	Yes
Rosendale WMA	Watonswan	10631229	5	\$2,750	Yes
WR Taylor Memorial WMA	Watonswan	10630219	70	\$3,500	Yes
Lewisville WMA	Watonswan	10630220	32	\$1,600	Yes
Siyo Waste	Yellow Medicine	11641228	3	\$2,500	Yes
Middle Antelope Valley WMA	Yellow	11444210	370	\$30,340	Yes

	Medicine				
Mound Springs WMA	Yellow Medicine	11546208	185	\$22,200	Yes
Mound Springs WMA	Yellow Medicine	11546208	63	\$25,200	Yes
Tatley WMA	Yellow Medicine	11446231	321	\$20,865	Yes



## Parcel Map



- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ✚ Other